Stability, Security, Transition, and Reconstruction Operations:

Meeting the Challenge

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Objective

- Support OSD Policy efforts to translate Directive 3000.05, *Military Support for Stability, Security, Transition, and Reconstruction (SSTR) Operations*, into an actionable agenda

- Briefing roadmap:

  - Identify the character of the threats confronting the United States that requires a capacity for SSTR operations

  - Provide a representative set of planning scenarios – both existing and prospective – and describe how they differ in terms of character and scale

  - Identify some critical competitions that emerge from these contingencies

  - Provide specific requirements and recommendations as to how best to proceed

Character of the Threats and Opportunities

- Several sets of plausible threats and opportunities could lead to situations requiring SSTR interventions:
  - Radical Islamists … who destabilize states or who compete at the sub-state level to supplant friendly governments
  - Failed States … which create crises requiring interventions for strategic or humanitarian reasons
  - Narco-traffickers … who challenge the governance of weak states and who potentially ally themselves with terrorists or other hostile actors
  - Great Power Rivalry (Proxy War) … that involves competitive efforts by major powers to support a government in a third state or to undermine it through an insurgency or other means
  - Shaping Opportunities … that consist of efforts to create a position of strength by helping an ally improve its internal governance or to induce a country to become a close partner of the United States through enhanced cooperation

Representative Scenarios

- Large State Failure – Indonesia or Nigeria
- Nuclear State Failure – Pakistan
- Ambiguous Aggression – Kenya
- Pandemic – Mexico
- Global Commerce Raiding
- Narco Trafficking – Colombia
- Great Power Proxy War – Central Asia
- Creating positions of strength – Afghanistan

Large State Failure: Indonesia

- Trigger: A struggle for power among various groups, including radical Islamists who foment sectarian and ethnic conflict in order to seize power, leads to the fragmentation of the country and collapse of the state

- Key response issues:
  - Operating in the world's largest Muslim nation amid sectarian/ethnic conflict and social chaos
  - Overcoming geographic scope of the archipelago and the limits on mobility it imposes
  - Securing strategic sea lines of communication, oil and gas production facilities, and political centers
  - Establishing and expanding zones of security for the population
  - Reconstituting a legitimate government and effective security institutions to establish law and order
  - Reestablishing the infrastructure and institutions for economic activity and basic services on a prompt and enduring basis
  - Precluding direct or covert intervention by regional powers (e.g., China, Iran, Saudi Arabia, India)

Nuclear State Failure: Pakistan

- Trigger: A combination of regime performance failure resulting from misallocation of resources and demographic pressure, growing radicalism in autonomous areas in the tribal areas and the Northwest Frontier Province, penetration by radical forces of the Army and ISI, and ethnic tensions leads to political crises that lead to the collapse of the state

- Key response issues:
  - Securing nuclear weapons and, potentially, defeating irregular forces armed with weapons of mass destruction
  - Operating in the world's second largest Muslim country amid sectarian/ethnic conflict and social chaos
  - Preventing or coping with the emergence of internal sanctuaries resulting from difficulty of terrain or opacity of tribal society
  - Establishing and expanding zones of security for the population
  - Reconstituting a legitimate government and effective security institutions to establish law and order on a large scale in a limited timeframe
  - Reestablishing the infrastructure and institutions for economic activity and basic services on a prompt and enduring basis
  - Precluding direct or covert intervention by regional powers (e.g., Iran, India)

Ambiguous Aggression: Kenya

- Trigger: Following successful practices used by Shia and Sunni radicals, Salafist Islamist groups establish networks of madrassa schools and social service organizations to penetrate Kenyan society and create a social base through indoctrination and patronage, while little or no corresponding effort is undertaken by moderate forces

- Key response issues:
  - Achieving a level of understanding of local political and social forces sufficient to be able to wage effective political warfare campaign that bolsters the government and discredits radical groups
  - Establishing an enduring but low-profile campaign – working through local proxies or partners – to create a "forward presence" capable of competing with the radicals in terms of political-ideological appeals and patronage
  - Strengthening local security services (particularly police and domestic intelligence) and capacity of the government to deliver services and stimulate economic development
  - Disrupting the external support system – particularly funding – that enables the activities of indigenous radical forces

Pandemic: Mexico

- Trigger: A global pandemic, originating in the developing world, reaches Mexico and overwhelms its public health system, producing a mass migration by both land and sea of desperate Mexicans seeking to gain access to the U.S. healthcare system that cannot be handled by the Border Patrol and Coast Guard

- Key response issues:
  - Providing area security in depth along the 2,000-mile border and along the California and Gulf coasts with a minimum loss of life to stem migration and spread of the pandemic in the United States
  - Establishing displaced persons zones on the Mexican side of the border and along Mexico's coasts and providing effective consequence management support in partnership with the Mexican government and its security forces
  - Protecting offshore oil and natural gas facilities from sabotage arising from the chaos
  - Maintaining minimum essential velocity of trade across the U.S.-Mexican border and through coastal ports
  - Protecting the Mexican government from societal backlash

Global Commerce Raiding

- Trigger: A loose global alliance of Islamist and terrorist organizations mount a campaign of attacks on the global shipping industry in order to cripple Western economies reliant on “just-in-time” inventory management and global supply chains
  - They first strike oil and LNG tankers with suicide ships and high-speed anti-ship cruise missiles, particularly at maritime chokepoints, and then declare they have placed radiological, nuclear, and biological weapons aboard container ships

- Key response issues:
  - Securing transit at every point along the global energy supply system against a global, low-intensity threat
  - Maintaining the minimally acceptable velocity of trade
  - Providing security at ports of embarkation and debarkation and key choke points
  - Organizing energy convoy escorts
  - Conducting SSTR operations in those countries that serve as the bases of operation of the Islamists and terrorists
  - Preventing introduction of radiological, nuclear, and biological weapons into U.S. territory

Narco-Trafficking: Colombia

- Trigger: An alliance of convenience develops among narco-traffickers, terrorists and insurgents, and external powers (Venezuela supported by China and Iran) and leads to a crisis of legitimacy as anti-government forces supplant the state, leading to the Colombian government's collapse

- Key response issues:
  - Establishing and expanding zones of security for the population that enable the separation of the people from anti-government forces
  - Disrupting external support to internal anti-government forces, including monitoring and disrupting infiltration of fighters, equipment, and funds
  - Reconstituting a legitimate government and effective security institutions on a large scale to establish law and order
  - Reestablishing the infrastructure and institutions for economic activity and basic services on a prompt and enduring basis
  - Establishing the basis for a robust economy centered on legal agriculture and industry

Great Power Rivalry: Central Asia

- Trigger: In order to achieve privileged access to Central Asian energy resources, China seeks to crowd out U.S. and Russian influence by working with Iran and Pakistan to destabilize governments friendly to its rivals and strengthening local actors (such as warlords, insurgents, and friendly states) who grant exclusive oil deals in exchange for security assistance and protection

- Key response issues:
  - In contested states, establishing and expanding zones of security for the population to provide rule of law and services and enable economic development
  - In contested states, inducing cooperation with the government by sub-state actors with legitimacy and/or power (e.g., tribal leaders, warlords)
  - In threatened states, strengthening governmental and security institutions on a large scale and increasing economic development
  - Developing cost-imposing strategies against China and its regional partners and/or disrupt China's partnerships (e.g., separating Pakistan)
  - Building partner capacity among friendly countries (e.g., Turkey, India) for allied SSTR operations
  - Enabling trade access to world markets through routes to the north and south

Creating Positions of Strength: Afghanistan

- Trigger: As the centerpiece of the strategy to defeat terrorists and extremists in the arc from North Africa through the Persian Gulf to South Asia, the United States and its allies place priority on creating a set of strong, successful, moderate Muslim states and working in partnership with them against extremists states such as Iran

- Key response issues:
  - Expanding zones of security for the population, particularly in the contested areas in the south and east
  - Disrupting the external support networks and sanctuaries of the Taliban
  - Establishing effective governance to provide the rule of law and basic services
  - Strengthening Afghan military and police forces to the point where they carry the principal burden for providing security, with NATO and the United States shifting to a mentoring and supporting role
  - Stimulating economic development that supplants the opium economy, increases internal revenues for the Afghan state, and illustrates the benefits of adopting the moderate path
  - Undertaking political, ideological, and geopolitical cooperation with Kabul against radical states in the region

Critical Competitions

Objective of SSTR Operations

- The objective of SSTR operations is to establish legitimate and effective governance in a country, overcoming the inherent challenges of establishing a political order and countering the competitive efforts of rival internal or external forces who seek to undermine stability

- It is the dysfunctions of a country's political order that give rise to the types of instability to which SSTR operations respond
  - Narrowly based government stimulates ethnic or sectarian conflict
  - Lack of social and political cohesion leads to fragmentation
  - Abusive or oppressive government triggers social or military resistance
  - Weak security institutions enable internal insurgencies and external support
  - Rogue regime requires external intervention to thwart wider threat

- To create stability in such settings, SSTR operations must establish a state that has popular legitimacy, effective institutions to provide order and basic services, and the capability to create economic growth

How to think about creating stability

- From the outset, an SSTR operation should be guided by a tailored political concept or plan for how a particular country can be made to function effectively, given its social, demographic, and political composition and level of development
  - What are the sources of political legitimacy or what leaders or social structures have genuine authority?
  - What was the underlying political logic in past periods of stability and progress?
  - How in the past have governments mobilized and organized a sufficient social base to achieve legitimacy?
  - How should state structures – particularly security forces – be built to support a given concept of stability?
  - What are the country's strongest economic sectors and how can growth be stimulated in real time?
  - What phases or intermediate stages need to be traversed to achieve the desired end state?

- SSTR operations do not take place in a vacuum but rather in a competitive environment involving internal actors (rival elites, armed factions, political spoilers) and external players (rival states, transnational actors)

Six Critical Competitions

- Success in establishing stability – effectively implementing one's tailored concept or plan for achieving stability – depends on prevailing in six critical competitions over rivals who seek to destabilize the country or build a different order
  - Social and Political Intelligence – who understands the social and political terrain better?
  - Legitimacy versus Counter Legitimacy – who secures the allegiance of a social base sufficient to create a stable political order?
  - State Building versus State Subversion – whose political and administrative structures govern the country's territory and extract internal revenues to support institutions and services?
  - Securing Population versus Coercing Population – who can create a security environment that is non-permissive for other competitors?
  - Commerce Generation versus Commerce Disruption – who can create conditions that enable economic development supportive of their political and military efforts
  - Cost Imposing Strategies – who can shape the overall competition to impose unsustainable costs on its rivals

Social and Political Intelligence

- Nature of the competition: Which competitor has the best understanding of how to influence the indigenous society?
  - Major advantage lies with those actors who have a superior knowledge of how the indigenous society works: Who are its natural leaders? What are the core operational values in its culture? What moves key social groups politically? How will the society or key groups react to potential political and policy actions?
  - The indigenous or regional competitors have an inherent advantage: the question is how do we narrow the gap

- Desired end state: An understanding of the society sufficient to develop the right political concept or plan for creating stability and to identify the key levers for political, military, and economic actions
  - At the broadest level, this requires knowing historic patterns of action and the logic of politics in the society and gaining a window in the society's hopes, preferences, and desires in order to know what will mobilize or alienate the people
  - More specifically, it requires the mapping of major social groups and their leaders at the national level and the development of a fine-grained understanding of the "local game" in key regions or areas

Social and Political Intelligence (cont.)

- Strategic approach:
  - Years before potential SSTR operations, develop a cadre of officers with deep knowledge of and experience in the specific country
    - A finger-tip feel for social and political intelligence cannot be acquired on the fly – it must be cultivated in certain officers over the course of their entire career
  - Map and analyze the full range of potentially significant leaders and social groups (e.g., tribes, clans, ethnic groups, militia groups, senior military officers, economic interest groups, political parties and factions, etc.)
  - Develop dense web of personal contacts, formal and informal, with key leaders, well before a potential SSTR operation in "open" countries and as quickly as possible after undertaking an SSTR operation in "closed" countries
    - At the national and regional levels, develop systematic outreach to cultivate and shape key leaders and to test their ability to mobilize action
    - At the local level, place high priority for intelligence collection and analysis on identifying authoritative leaders, networks of influential figures, and key social groups, as well as their interests, aspirations, and fears
  - This foundation of knowledge is essential to craft a valid tailored political concept or plan to create stability and to use limited resources and levers of power to influence the society to move in the desired direction

Political Legitimacy

- Nature of the competition: Which competitor persuades the indigenous society that its vision or actions have political legitimacy and mobilizes the most support from key elites and social coalitions?
  - The popular narrative through which the SSTR operation is viewed could be liberation, occupation, humanitarian action, or self-interested exploitation
  - Establishing the desired political order requires the fashioning of a core political elite – including a central leader – that can sustain it while managing those who might be potential spoilers
  - The political elite must, in turn, be supported by a sufficiently broad social base to create political consent and/or to staff key institutions with loyal personnel

- Desired end state:
  - A broadly legitimizing narrative of the SSTR operation and the political order it is designed to support
  - Creation of a core political elite who share U.S. goals and who have the ability to build political and other institutions
  - Mobilization of the largest possible social base for the government created or bolstered through the SSTR operation while holding to the absolute minimum those left out of or hostile to the political process

Political Legitimacy (cont.)

- Strategic approach:
  - Controlling the narrative:
    - Stage the circumstances leading to the SSTR operation to create a narrative of liberation or support for the aspirations of the people
    - Understand the psychologies, preconceptions, political tendencies of the host nation, including key segments of the population
    - Assess how the population gets its information and particularly what channels or sources are trusted
    - Develop mechanisms to provide information through those channels or sources in real time
    - Understand how to make highly emotional political appeals supportive of policy goals
    - Make shaping the unfolding narrative a leadership priority for those heading the SSTR operation
    - Identify and utilize an indigenous cadre talented in the art and science of propaganda – the key is to speak to the society in terms compelling to their fears and aspirations

Political Legitimacy (cont.)

- Creating a supportive political elite:
  - Use the social and leadership map of the society to create tailored influence strategies to shape an elite coalition supportive of the SSTR mission
  - Adopt a “hands on” approach to shaping the country’s internal political development throughout the SSTR operation
    - This requires deployment of a U.S. representative with centralized control over policy who is viewed as credible by competing indigenous factions
  - In operations involving regime change, establish a process leading to the establishment of an indigenous government as soon as possible
    - In an age of nationalism, a policy of enduring occupation is unlikely to lead to stability
  - Identify and recruit for a central leadership role an individual who broadly shares U.S. values and vision, who is skilled in political maneuver in his or her society, and who has an aptitude for state building
    - The challenge is to find our Adenauer or Karzai – incorruptible leaders who command the loyalty of a majority of the population – before competitors find their Lenin or Castro
  - Maximize the scope of the coalition – include any one who has power and who is willing to cooperate – even if this means involving unsavory figures
    - As long as the political order is weak, it is vital not to allow leaders or groups to drift toward the opposition or hostile orientations

Political Legitimacy (cont.)

- Mobilizing the largest possible social base:
  - Understand that national elites are likely to be imperfect representatives of the society's sub-national social groups (e.g., tribes, social classes, interest groups, etc.) and that direct appeals and relationships must be developed to mobilize support from such groups
  - Identify all groups whose support is critical to stability and develop tailored strategies to persuade their leaders to join the social coalition supportive of the political process or host government
    - Often, and particularly in traditional societies, this requires the use of trusted interlocutors – indigenous individuals or expatriates – who serve as guides to the society and who can make connections to key social leaders
    - Selection of such trusted interlocutors is one of the most important tasks in preparing to build a supportive political coalition
  - Organize a political and programmatic agenda that addresses the key problems and needs of the groups in the social coalition, with an emphasis on working on those problems that can only be alleviated with U.S. assistance
    - Employ systems of patronage in societies where such relationships are central to the social structure

Political Legitimacy (cont.)

- Develop common shared experiences – for example, in conflict or in the cultural domain – to build enduring relationships with leader and groups in the coalition
  - This requires a systematic approach to ensuring the “hand off” of relationships between one set of civilian and military leaders and the next
  - Deployment of MAAGs in peacetime facilitates this effort, as do PME efforts and deployment of MAAGs, advisors, etc., in contingency operations
- Analyze and develop countermeasures, particularly in consultation with indigenous allies, to the mobilization strategies of competitors (e.g., social service provision by Islamists)

State Building

- Nature of competition: Which competitors – particularly which indigenous groups – will hold the power to govern society and what will be the reach of the state?
  - The institutions or ministries that control the instruments of force – the means of coercion in the society – must be built and shaped in ways that conform to our political concept or theory of success for the SSTR operation
  - The extension of the effective reach of the state – which competitors might oppose or which might be degraded by corruption or disorder – is an essential precondition to mobilizing the society (e.g., recruit individuals for security services), extracting resources (e.g., taxes), controlling the distribution of patronage (e.g., jobs and resources), and providing services (e.g., infrastructure) that enable a successful society
  - The provision of services – security, health care, water, etc. – is central to the competition for legitimacy
- Desired end state:
  - A monopoly of force configured to give control over coercion to those institutions or actors that the SSTR mission seeks to empower
  - An effective – competent and honest – administration of government at all levels that establishes the rule of law and that creates conditions for social progress and economic prosperity

State Building (cont.)

- Provision by the host government of a sufficiently wide range of services and on a sufficiently large scale to persuade the people to view the government as legitimate

- Strategic approach:
  - Understand that all actors – friends as well as competitors – have agendas designed to gain advantage for themselves
    - SSTR operations should avoid the pitfall of unwittingly serving the agenda of one group and should instead consistently seek to build or shape a host government that conforms to our theory of success
  - Instruments of coercion:
    - Maintain standing assessments of existing security institutions, and validate these upon initiation of the SSTR, in order to recruit cooperation from those elements who are or can be made to be supportive of our theory of success
      - In open societies, cultivate relationships with leaders of security institutions as a priority
    - Develop a plan to "fill the security space" from the outset of the SSTR operation
      - U.S. military forces, in many circumstances, may not be sufficient to achieve this mission

State Building (cont.)

- Instruments of coercion (cont.):
  - The preferred option should be to harness existing or pre-SSTR security institutions to the extent possible – “vet, monitor, and reform” should be the rule and “disband and demobilize” should be the exception
  - Because a security vacuum will result in “self organization” of security through militias or other informal means, SSTR operations should contemplate the controlled organization of such forces if needed
  - Understand that U.S. military forces cannot be the enduring solution for provision of internal security and that the main effort should be to develop indigenous military, police and intelligence capabilities
    - This requires the development of a capability to deploy “MNSTC-I in a box” – the ability to field a training, equipping, and mentoring capability immediately and to reform and stand up indigenous forces on a large scale within months
    - The default solution should be to build nationally representative and professional security institutions
    - Security institutions must be built on the national, regional, and local levels
- Administrative reach of the state:
  - Maintain standing assessments, and validate these upon initiation of SSTR operations, of the institutional capacity of the state (e.g., administration, courts and prosecutors, corrections, property rights systems, etc.) in all areas of governance that are essential to the SSTR theory of success

State Building (cont.)

- Administrative reach of the state (cont.):
  - Understand that the U.S. capacity to govern directly will be limited and focus on preserving pre-existing capacity for governance and administration and reforming and/or strengthening such capacities over time
    - Indigenous approaches rather than Western models may be preferable approaches in many cases, particularly in indigenous societies
    - Efforts to develop legal codes or to build the rule of law, for example, must be rooted in previous social experience and/or institutions
  - Develop and maintain an ability to deploy “CORDS in a box” – a system that establishes parallel advisory offices paired with every level of the host government to mentor officials, to improve vertical linkages between national and local levels of government, and to enable the provision of U.S. financial resources through the channels of the host government rather than through NGOs or contractors
    - This capability creates the “plumbing” – the pipes – through which government services and U.S. assistance can be delivered
  - Use the CORDS-like structure to develop immediate “quick impact” projects and medium-term development plans for each locality so that the SSTR operation is seen to improve the well being of the host nation
  - Develop and maintain the capability to train a civil service on a large scale and on a limited time frame

State Building (cont.)

- Delivery of services:
  - Develop and execute a phased plan for enhancing services – starting with quick impact efforts and moving toward long-term progress – that creates an immediate effect and a perceptible positive trajectory of progress
  - Ensure that the host government's capacity to deliver services exceeds those of its competitors

Securing the Population

- Nature of competition: Which competitor can transform the territory of the host country into a “non-permissive environment” for the security forces or political structures of its rivals
  - The center of gravity in the political-military contest in SSTR operations is the indigenous population – their allegiance and cooperation is the sine qua non of success
  - The people typically possess intelligence information about armed elements in their midst that, if provided, would enable effective police and military action to neutralize those forces
  - Physically denying the enemy access to the population – preventing attacks and intimidation – is essential to giving the people the confidence to take the risks of providing such intelligence
- Desired end state: A non-permissive environment for forces seeking to use violence to destabilize the host country and undermine its government and a permissive environment for the military and civilian activities of the United States and its allies and partners

Securing the Population (cont.)

- Strategic approach:
  - Establish unity of command in the field and centralized control in the interagency in Washington
  - Develop precision intelligence capabilities optimized for SSTR operations
    - Divide area of operations into a grid, with intelligence teams assigned to each sector and fusion centers at the regional and national levels
    - Deploy teams composed of the following elements:
      - Case officers who have hybrid skills that combine clandestine HUMINT source management and the ability of a “cop on the beat” to collect intelligence through broad contacts with society
      - Interrogators controlled at the local level and trained to enable immediate interrogation utilizing local information
      - Analysts deployed to the local level to develop a mosaic or composite picture of the environment (e.g., key social groups and leaders, networks and social structures, patterns of movement and behavior, etc.)
      - Locally controlled SIGINT capabilities
      - Liaison officers to exchange information with higher levels and to organize police and strike operations
    - Collection and analysis efforts should be prioritized roughly along the following lines: 50 percent on the local social environment, 25 percent on the enemy infrastructure, and 25 percent to enable targeting of the enemy leadership and forces

Securing the Population (cont.)

- Field brigades optimized for SSTR operations
  - Current general purpose forces are optimized for conventional conflict, but SSTR operations are the principal mission today and are likely to remain a central mission for the foreseeable future
- Design and implement a traditional “ink spot” security campaign as the principal vehicle to establish population security
  - Such a campaign begins by fully securing areas of strength on the part of the host government and progressively building out security in adjacent areas
  - Each expansion of security should involve the following steps:
    - Create a security perimeter around the areas to be secured
    - Deploy U.S. and host government security forces at a high level of density to clear enemy fighters and cadres or to cause them to flee
    - Build up precision intelligence capabilities and indigenous security forces to prevent infiltration by the enemy
    - Retain quick reaction forces to strike enemy forces, either within or beyond the security perimeter
    - Reinforce security operations with improvements in governance, reconstruction, and economic development

Securing the Population (cont.)

- Strategic approach:
  - Maintain strike forces capable of destroying time-sensitive targets
    - SSTR forces must be able to detect, identify, track, and neutralize highly time-sensitive targets, such as leaders, command elements, and significant concentrations of forces and resources
  - Develop approaches to isolate the battlefield – to create blockades that prevent the infiltration by the enemy of people and resources (materiel, supplies, money) from outside the host country and to prevent the development of external sanctuaries
    - SSTR operations typically have aspects of the competition that extend into neighboring states or that involve transnational actors
    - Isolating the battlefield is almost always an essential requirement for success
    - Proven approaches include building border control regimes, supplemented by dense intelligence networks and screening activities in border areas, and diplomatic action

Commerce Generation

- Nature of competition: Can the host government supported by the SSTR enable significant, self-sustaining wealth generation that improves the livelihoods of its people?
  - The competition over the shaping and control of wealth generation typically involves rival efforts by insurgents, warlords, or organized criminal elements
  - Typically, control over wealth generation gives leverage over key social groups and enables strategies to pursue political power and legitimacy
- Desired end state: Establishment of an economic system that generates wealth for the people and that implements the theory of success of the SSTR
- Strategic approach:
  - Maintain assessments of sectoral economic opportunities, validate these upon initiation of the SSTR operation, and use these to craft economic development plans based on the growth of private-sector capacity
  - Utilizing the CORDS-like structure, deploy significant resources support reconstruction and economic development:
    - Reconstruction: Inject immediate funds through CERP-like quick impact spending to overcome economic disruptions cause by instability or by the SSTR operation

Commerce Generation (cont.)

- Strategic approach (cont.):
  - Local economic development: Establish linkages between local and national markets for inputs and outputs and provide productive capital for micro-enterprises and small- and medium-sized businesses
  - National economic development: Provide productive capital and assist in brokering joint ventures with leading international firms to create value chains in all sectors in which the host country has a comparative advantage (e.g., agriculture, extractive industries, transport, manufacturing)
  - Channel economic development projects toward groups who are part of the social coalition supportive of the SSTR and host government

Cost-Imposing Strategies

- Nature of competition: Which competitor can adopt a strategy that imposes unsustainable costs on its rivals?
  - SSTR operations often impose far more costs on the United States than on those seeking to defeat U.S. and host nation efforts
- Desired end state: Keeping costs of the SSTR operation to a sustainable level while increasing the costs to opponents to an unsustainable level
- Strategic approach:
  - Develop new thinking on more economic models for SSTR operations
    - El Salvador was stabilized with a handful of advisors and limited foreign assistance, and Afghanistan has been stabilized with a comparatively light footprint
  - Create “Red Teams” to assess what competitors fear most and develop activities to exploit those vulnerabilities
  - Exploit proven cost-imposing strategies against armed opponents:
    - Eliminating or putting pressure on sanctuaries, both internal and external
    - Targeting leadership and command structures
    - Accentuating divisions and rivalries within the enemy camp

Cost Imposing Strategies (cont.)

- Strategic approach (cont.):
  - Denying physical access to the population by creating a non-permissive environment for enemy political cadre or fighters
  - Mobilizing moral or political opposition through political action or propaganda

Recommendations

- Key assumptions
- Doctrine and concept of operations
- Command structure
- Standing Capabilities
  - Military Assistance and Advisory Groups
  - Forward Liaison and Assistance Groups
  - Security Training and Equipping Groups
  - Civil Operations, Reconstruction, and Development Support Groups
  - Specialized MAAG staff elements
- Enabling Capabilities
  - Professional Military Education
  - Training
  - Career Development

Key Assumptions

- SSTR Operations will likely dominate U.S. military operations over the next several decades
- SSTR operations will be conducted on a global scale
- The time frame for conducting individual operations is likely to be protracted
- DoD will bear the brunt of the responsibility for the success or failure of these operations
- Success will depend upon military forces specialized for this mission – it will not come from general purpose forces taking on the mission as a "lesser included case"
- As the magnitude of the challenge likely exceeds the resources to be available, success will also depend upon DoD's ability to build partner capacity on a large scale

Doctrine and Concept of Operations

- We need a theory of war – to include a theory of success – for SSTR operations that must define the requirements for political-military stability
- This theory of success should build upon the actions needed to achieve the desired end states of the six critical competitions
  - An understanding of the host country society sufficient to develop the right political concept or plan for creating stability
  - A broadly legitimizing narrative, a core effective political elite, and a broad social base supportive of the SSTR and the host government
  - A monopoly of force in security institutions, an effective administration of government, and a adequate provision of services to establish order and the rule of law and to bolster the host government's legitimacy
  - A non-permissive environment for opposing forces and a permissive environment for U.S. and host government activities
  - An economic system that generates sufficient wealth for the well being of the people
  - Keeping costs of the SSTR operation to a sustainable level while increasing the costs to opponents to an unsustainable level
- SSTR doctrine should reflect a progressive, phased approach to what is typically a protracted campaign

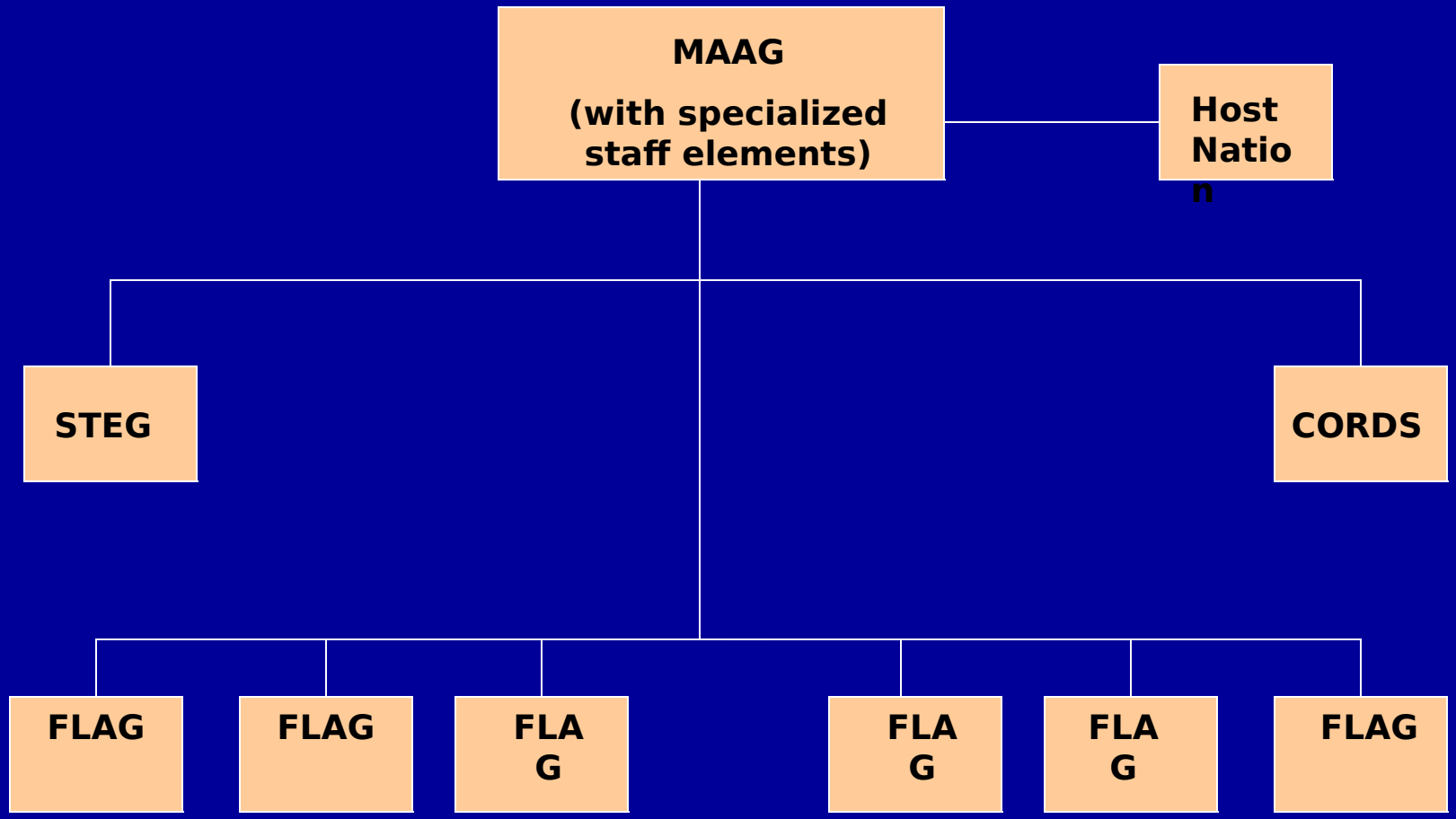
Command Structure

- Military Assistance and Advisory Groups (MAAGs) will be established as the deployed field commands to lead SSTR operations
  - The MAAG element could number between a few hundred or several thousand, depending upon the scale of the operation
  - MAAGs would command U.S. forces in the SSTR operation, develop and execute political shaping activities, and lead the capacity building and advisory efforts to support the host government
- MAAGs will have the following characteristics and elements
  - MAAG commander will report either to the U.S. ambassador or the regional COCOM, as determined by the President
  - MAAGs will be commanded by a two- or three-star flag officer, depending on the level of effort
  - MAAGs will exercise command over the Forward Liaison and Assistance Groups (FLAGs) – military forces specially tailored to SSTR operations -- that are operating within the area of responsibility
  - MAAGs will command Security Training and Equipping Groups (STEGS) – the deployed “MNSTC-I in a box” elements
  - MAAGs will field advisory teams embedded in indigenous forces as appropriate, drawing these teams from MAAG assets (e.g., FLAGs, STEGs)

Command Structure (cont.)

- MAAG characteristics and elements (cont.):
  - MAAGs will command Civilian Operations, Reconstruction, and Development Support (CORDS) Groups – the deployed “CORDS in a box” elements
  - MAAGs will contain key staff elements for intelligence, political action, direction, political strategic planning, and economic action
  - MAAGs, when not deployed, would be embedded in their regional COCOM headquarters

Notional MAAG Structure



Specialized SSTR Force Structure

- SSTR operations will be conducted by forces optimized for these missions
  - Ground forces will consist of 45 AC/RC brigades that have been converted into FLAG formations
    - 27 active component Army brigades (out of a total of 42 AC brigades)
    - 3 Marine regiments/brigade-equivalents
    - 15 National Guard brigades
    - In addition, several STEG and CORDS Groups will be created for rapid deployment and attachment to MAAGs
  - SSTR maritime operations will utilize littoral combat ship squadrons among other assets, will protect commerce at key chokepoints and facilities, and will be subordinate to the MAAG commander
  - SSTR aerospace operations will conduct, among their range of missions, wide- and local-area surveillance, prompt strikes against fleeting or time-sensitive targets, and detection of radiological, biological, or chemical agents
- While capable of operating around the globe (like SOF), FLAGs, STEGs, and CORDS Groups would be oriented on specific regions and will be rotated on a 3:1 steady-state basis or surged during periods of conflict

Forward Liaison and Assistance Groups

- FLAGs constitute the principal ground force “maneuver” formations for an SSTR operation and can function as a “forward presence” force or in direct action operations
- FLAGs are independently deployable, brigade-size elements optimized for SSTR operations and composed principally of the following force types:
  - SSTR intelligence units
  - Infantry
  - Military police
  - Special operations forces
  - Construction engineers
  - Transportation, communications, and logistics elements
  - Civil affairs
  - PSYOP units (for the war of ideas)
  - Quick reaction force squadrons
  - WMD quick reaction force
  - Military advisor teams (if needed)
- FLAGs, working with host country forces, will implement the “ink spot” campaign to secure the population

Security Training and Equipping Groups

- The STEGs are specialized units that are attached to a MAAG and that direct the organization, training, and equipping of host government security ministries, armed forces, and constabularies
  - STEGs will be composed of 2,000 to 3,000 troops and will be commanded by a one- or two-star flag officer
  - STEGs will be “top heavy” – weighted more heavily toward officers and NCOs than a standard U.S. military unit
  - Several STEGs will be a standing part of the U.S. force structure and will be capable of rapid deployment to a MAAG
  - STEGs will typically deploy for tours of two to three years in duration, with a rotation base of 3:1, in order to build up necessary personal relationships with host country leaders
  - STEGs will be capable of mass throughput of host country personnel – producing tens of thousands of STEG-trained forces annually with little or no lead time or preparation in country
  - STEGs will have major dedicated stockpiles of equipment – arms, ammunition, mobility assets, communications, etc. – to immediately outfit host country forces, with no delays due to procurement or manufacturing

Civil Operations, Reconstruction, and Development Support Groups

- The CORDS Groups are specialized units that are attached to the MAAGs and that supply advice, mentoring, and support to the non-security structures of the host government (e.g., civil administration, rule of law sector, heath care, economic development, etc.)
  - CORDS Groups will be composed of 4,000 to 5,000 troops, civilian personnel, and expert personal services contractors and will be commanded by a one- or two-star flag officer
    - CORDS Groups will have a mixed civilian-military chain of command
  - CORDS Groups will create parallel advisory offices to host nation ministries at the national, regional, provincial, and (on a rotating basis) local levels and will develop annual plans for civil operations, reconstruction, and development activities
  - CORDS Groups will have significant flexible funding and procurement rules that they can expend through the mechanisms of the host government at all levels
  - Several CORDS Groups will be a standing parts of the U.S. force structure and will be capable of rapid deployment to a MAAG

CORDS Groups (cont.)

- CORDS Groups will be capable of immediately undertaking quick impact projects upon deployment as well as developing medium- and long-term capacity building and economic development programs
- CORDS Groups will typically deploy for tours of two to three years in duration, with a rotation base of 3:1, in order to build up necessary personal relationships with host country leaders

Specialized MAAG Staff Elements

- MAAGs will include several specialized staff elements to support key SSTR activities
  - Tailored Intelligence Units: These will facilitate establishing a “precision intelligence grid” in their area of operations
    - Success will require personnel continuity: collectors and analysts who are rotated out of the AOR should remain focused on their particular SSTR region, both to support their replacements and to be prepared for future redeployments to the MAAG
  - Strategic Assessment and Planning Element: These elements will develop the political concept or plan – the strategy for success – that will drive the SSTR operation
    - This mission involves mapping the political and social landscape of the area of operation, particularly key social groups and their leaders, and develops a deep knowledge of the area’s political dynamics
    - It is tasked with identify key leaders who share our values, who can command support from a critical mass of the population, who have strong political and state-building skills – for example, a Yoshida or a Magsaysay
    - The political concept or plan should involve the shaping of a cooperative and capable political elite, a broad and supportive social base, and approaches to managing the actions of potential spoilers

Specialized MAAG Staff Elements

- Strategic Assessment and Planning Element (cont.):
  - In light of the central importance of this function, exceptional service in this staff element will be an important factor in an officer's selection to command a FLAG, STEG, CORDS Group, or MAAG
- Political Action Element: This group is oriented on shaping the perceptions and managing relations with local elites, as well as political and social groups
  - This element carries out the political shaping operation to move elites and key social groups in the desired directions
- Direct Action Element: This element will exploit intelligence on the enemy's political and command infrastructure for the purpose of targeted direct action, especially when dealing with high-value, time-sensitive targets
- Economic Action Element: This group will design and oversee the phased economic support plan within the SSTR operation
  - Particular emphasis will be placed on using economic action to achieve political outcomes, in terms of shaping a positive political narrative, affecting conduct of key elites, recruiting support from key social groups, and managing potential spoilers

Enabling Capabilities

- Successful SSTR operations will depend on development in the institutional Army and Marine Corps of several key enabling capabilities:
  - Professional Military Education: DoD educational institutions must develop courses of instruction optimized to produce the new skills sets needed for SSTR units and operations
    - World-class faculty with specialized skills and knowledge relevant to SSTR operations should be recruited at all institutions
    - High priority should be given to cultural and language training and foreign area studies
    - Institutions should expand the enrollment of foreign military officers, particularly from regions in which SSTR operations may take place
    - Programs sending U.S. officers to foreign PME institutions should be increased
  - Specialized Training Capabilities: Steps need to be taken to reverse the erosion of the U.S. military's training advantage
    - The enemy operates at their "national training center" every day in Afghanistan and Iraq
    - DoD needs to introduce new ways of training that enable units to develop the capacity to effect a winning campaign to influence local attitudes, particularly through non-kinetic means

Enabling Capabilities (cont.)

- Career Development: A litmus test for adapting to the requirements of the SSTR mission will be the development of a career track optimized to produce leaders with the needed skill sets and experiences
  - The career path for a FLAG commander or a MAAG chief will necessarily be different from those of a “traditional” force brigade or division commander
  - Officers who choose the SSTR career path should expect to see a career progression characterized by the following:
    - Assignment to MAAG-related units and staff elements
    - Staff and war college education in order to achieve advanced proficiency in a select area (e.g,, regional studies, communications, economic development, etc.)
    - Graduate education at the Master’s or Ph.D. level
    - A utilization tour of one or two years spent traveling in the region that is the focus of their specialization
  - The SSTR career path must enable an officer to achieve high rank:
    - Commanders of FLAGs, STEGs, and CORDS Groups (brigade size units) must be from the SSTR career track
    - Commanders of MAAGs (two- or three-star billets) must be SSTR qualified
    - Successful MAAG commanders must be eligible for regional and functional commands and as heads of major services (four-star billets)
  - These changes will require redesign of the career incentives instituted as a result of Goldwater Nichols

Conclusion

- Success in SSTR operations will require major changes in the U.S. military's doctrine, force structure, and capabilities – we have presented here only a "first cut" at addressing the needed actions
- SSTR operations are likely to dominate the security challenges posed by non-peer competitors, regardless of whether we succeed in Afghanistan and Iraq
- The key competitions that will determine success or failure in this form of warfare are quite different from those that yield success in traditional warfare
- These changes will have the greatest impact on the Army – but all services will need to effect significant changes
- This is essential because success in SSTR operations will predominantly depend of the capabilities and actions of the DoD and its leadership